

Appl. No. 10/052,684  
Amdt. dated October 20, 2006  
Reply to Final Office Action of September 6, 2006

PATENT

**Amendment(s) to the Drawings:**

The attached drawing sheet includes changes to Fig. 4 and replaces the original sheet.

Reference numerals 30, 32a, 32b, 34a, 34b, 36a, 36b, 36c, 36d, 38, and 40 have been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Claims 1-6, 8-19, 21-34, and 36-43 are pending. Claims 3, 8, 22, 24, and 42 have been amended. Claims 7 and 35 have been canceled by this amendment.

Fig. 4 was objected to for missing reference numerals.

Claims 3, 8, 22, 24, 31, and 42 were objected to for minor informalities.

Claims 41 and 43 were objected to for being substantial duplicates of claims 7 and 35, respectively.

Claims 1-6, 22-24, and 31-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102 for being anticipated by So et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 7,012,919).

It is noted with appreciation that claims 17-19, 21, and 42 are allowed.

It is further noted with appreciation that claims 7-16, 25-30, and 35-40 are deemed to be allowable.

**Drawing Objections**

Fig. 4 has been amended to include missing reference numerals. As to reference numerals 32, 34, and 36, the specification uses these numerals to collectively refer to their lettered counterparts. For example, 32 is used to refer to 32a and 32b. The specification has been amended to indicate this convention. No new matter has been added.

**Claim Objections**

Claims 3, 8, 22, 24, and 42 have been amended per the examiner's suggestions.

Claim 31 has not been amended. A closer inspection of claim 31 as amended in the previous response shows that the word "physical" is indeed spelled correctly.

**Claim Rejections**

Respectfully, Applicant submits that the Section 102 rejection of the claims is overcome, as discussed below. Therefore, the rejected claims have not been substantively amended. Reconsideration of the rejected claims is respectfully requested.

An aspect of the rejected claims is the treatment of the physical links as a single entity. For example, independent claim 1 recites in part "a plurality of physical links ... wherein

the physical links within each of the virtual links ... are collectively regarded as a single entity by the control component with respect to the label switched path.” Similarly, independent claim 22 recites in part “wherein ... the control component treats the plurality of physical links within each virtual link as a single entity.” Independent claim 31 recites in part “treating the physical links within each of the virtual links ... collectively as a single entity.”

The Office action cited column 2, lines 21-32 of So et al. for teaching this foregoing aspect of the pending claims, citing the FEC (forwarding equivalent class) described by So et al. to be the recited “single entity”. However, So et al. clearly write “Each FEC is a set of packets that are forwarded over the same path through a network, even if the individual packets' ultimate destinations are different.” *Col. 2, lines 22-26 (emphasis added)*. First, the FEC is forwarded over the same path. There is no teaching, or even a suggestion, of treating a plurality of physical links as a single entity. Second, the FEC is a set of packets. So et al. does not teach that the set of packets is treated as a single entity; and even if they do, the FEC is a set of packets (i.e., intangible data) not a plurality of physical links that are treated as a single entity.

So et al., therefore, do not teach or suggest the recited “physical links with ... are collectively regarded as a single entity.” The Section 102 rejection of the claims is believed to be overcome.

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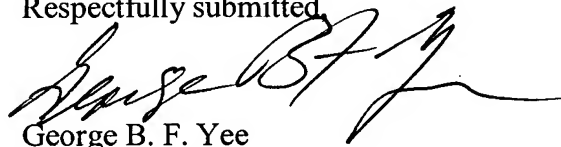
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted



George B. F. Yee  
Reg. No. 37,478

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP  
Two Embarcadero Center, Eighth Floor  
San Francisco, California 94111-3834  
Tel: 650-326-2400  
Fax: 415-576-0300  
Attachments  
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